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NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Maurice "Mo" Green, Superintendent of Public Instruction
www.dpi.nc.gov

October 22, 2025

Dr. Eric C. Bracy, Superintendent
Cumberland County Schools
2465 Gillespie Street
Fayetteville, NC 28306
ericcbracy@ccs.k12.nc.us

[redacted]

VIA DPI ENCRYPTED EMAIL

Re: Iron Horse – Cumberland County Schools
Intake Letter: Complaint Number 25-119

Dear Dr. Bracy and Mr. Iron Horse:

On **October 16, 2025**, the Office of Exceptional Children (OEC) received the state complaint filed by **Mr.** [redacted] on behalf of **his child**, [redacted] The complainant alleges that the local education agency, **Cumberland County Schools (CMS)**, failed to follow federal and state laws regarding children with disabilities.[1] Based upon statements in the complaint and supporting documentation, the OEC has identified the following issues for investigation:

Whether CMS followed the federal regulations, state laws and/or state *Policies* regarding the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE), from August 26, 2025, through October 16, 2025, specific to:

- **Implementation of the IEP; specifically, accommodations.**
- **Development, review, and revision of the IEP to meet the unique needs of the student, including consideration of medical information provided by the parent.**

The complaint alleges violations that are beyond the purview of the OEC under the IDEA or NC *Policies*; specifically, concerns related to personnel conduct and retaliation. Concerns related to the abovementioned allegations may be addressed through the district's procedures for navigating parent/ student grievances and can be found in the district's board policies.

An investigation of the issue identified above will be completed, and the final report will be sent on or before **December 15, 2025**, in accordance with the 60-day timeline. The report will contain a corrective action plan if the investigation results in the finding of noncompliance.

[1] The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) Amendments of 2004 (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), the IDEA regulations (34 CFR § 300), Article 9 §115C of the North Carolina General Statutes, and the North Carolina Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities.

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The special education laws strongly encourage the parties to engage in dispute resolution at the local level to resolve the complaint in a timely manner for the benefit of the child. The EC Division can provide an impartial mediator at the request of the parties to assist in that process. The 60-day timeline can be extended if exceptional circumstances exist, or the parties are engaged in private mediation and agree to the extension. If the complaint is resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, a signed, written agreement must be provided to the consultant assigned to the investigation, as listed at the end of this letter.

Both parties are encouraged to send any documentation that supports their positions **within 15 days of receiving the encrypted email of this letter**. The LEA shall provide this office with a written narrative response to the allegations **no later than the 15th day, November 6, 2025**. After the 15th day, no further evidence will be accepted as part of this investigation from either party. Should the complainant have evidence to submit that could indicate an additional violation, not already being investigated, they may submit a formal state complaint to be considered as a new and independent issue. Additionally, the LEA shall provide this office with proposed resolutions, if appropriate, and copies of the documents listed below.

Please send a copy of the following documents in effect during the identified periods above:

1. Any Individualized Education Program (IEP), Prior Written Notice (PWN), and IEP Meeting Minutes **not already located** in Every Child Accountability Tracking System (ECATS).
2. Any written communication with the parent(s) related to the issues listed above.
3. Documentation of the provision of accommodations as listed in the IEP.
4. Any documentation or data used in the decision-making process during the development, review, and revision of the IEP, including information provided by the parent.
5. Any additional information deemed relevant to the identified issues.

If a due process petition that contains one or more of the same allegations has been or is filed with the Office of Administrative Hearings, the OEC will set aside the investigation of those allegations until the conclusion of the hearing. The consultant assigned to this case will investigate any allegations not included in the due process petition.

The investigation of this complaint has been assigned to **Ms. Deborah Throm**, Dispute Resolution Consultant. Please send all correspondence to them in a confidential, electronic format. If you are unable to send the required documents and narrative response in an electronic format, please contact **Ms. Throm** at **deborah.throm@dpi.nc.gov** or **984-236-2572.** If you have any questions about the complaint process or wish to provide more information, please reach out.

Sincerely,

Signed by:
Sara Self-Maddox
FC88FCE41A5045A...

Sara Self-Maddox, Section Chief
IDEA Dispute Resolution
Office of Exceptional Children

Signed by:
Deborah Throm
02B156587BD243D...

Deborah Throm, Consultant
IDEA Dispute Resolution
Office of Exceptional Children

SSM/[DT]/ssm

Procedural Safeguards: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/11182/download?attachment

c Ayanna Jones-Richard, Exceptional Children Director, CCS, ayannarichard@ccs.k12.nc.us
Mia Jackson, EC's Legal & Compliance Consultant, CCS, miajackson@ccs.k12.nc.us
Traci Royal, IDEA Consultant: Regional Administrative Support, OEC